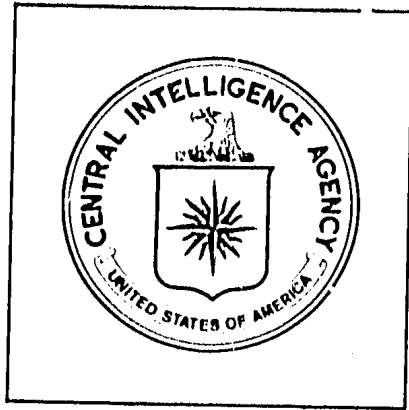


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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

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Moscow's Americanologists on Detente

Two prominent members of Moscow's Institute of the USA and Canada have in recent articles defended Soviet detente policy against Western critics, and perhaps against domestic skeptics as well.

The articles seem to be fresh evidence of Moscow's concern over what it regards as a recrudescence of anti-Soviet sentiment in the West, particularly in the US. Both articles betray a certain defensiveness about the future of detente, in one case by a blustery tone, in the other by an apparently forced effort to reassure that all will be well in relations between the US and the USSR.

Izvestia on September 3 published a lengthy article by Georgy Arbatov, director of the institute and Moscow's leading academic authority on the US. Evidently responding to Western denigration of the European security agreement, Arbatov defends the USSR against charges of non-compliance, especially with the human contacts provisions of "Basket Three," by launching a sharp counterattack aimed at discrediting the West's right to pass judgment on the Soviet Union. Arbatov's tough line may be intended to set the stage for future rebuffs of Western efforts to "interfere" in Soviet internal affairs. He may also want to assure the internal audience that Moscow's interest in promoting detente will not lead to an easing of its tight control over domestic affairs.

In a clear message to the West, Arbatov denies that the Soviets are seeking to use detente to "nudge forward" class and national liberation struggles. He denies that the difficulties facing the US in Greece, Turkey, and Portugal are a consequence of Soviet actions. At the same time, he expressly

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rejects any interpretation of detente entailing a Soviet obligation to preserve the "social status quo." In essence, Arbatov argues that the USSR has every right under detente to support its friends.

Arbatov also seems to be reassuring his domestic readers that support for detente remains strong in the US. He implicitly cautions his Soviet readers not to overestimate the strength of detente's opponents and not to turn away from a policy which has brought the USSR "striking" achievements.

The message that US-Soviet relations are still generally headed in the right direction is also conveyed in an article appearing in the September issue of the Soviet journal *International Affairs*. Written by Genrikh Trofimenko, a senior staff member of Arbatov's institute, the article contends that bilateral relations have attained a "certain stability" that can sustain tension-producing shocks. He cites the 1973 Middle East crisis and 1974 US trade legislation as sources of tension whose effects have been fully overcome.

Trofimenko argues that the complex of bilateral agreements since 1972 has created a stabilizing basis for relations which, if not unshakable, has at least permitted the two sides to weather subsequent problems without a damaging "ripple" effect.

Trofimenko adds to this rosy assessment the view that enemies of detente in the US will be overcome. In support of this assertion he claims that even the US "establishment" now supports detente with the USSR. He professes confidence that economic relations will be normalized and that further progress will be made on limiting strategic weapons.

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Moscow's Show of Unconventional Art Is On Again

The Soviet regime has reversed itself and is granting permission for Moscow's unconventional artists to hold a 10-day indoor exhibit of their works starting September 20 [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] According to the US embassy, both the original decision in late August to ban the exhibit and its reversal a week later were made at the Central Committee level. A similar but smaller scale show of unorthodox art is reportedly scheduled to open in Leningrad on September 10.

The regime may have acted to avoid unfavorable Western publicity on the first anniversary on September 15 of the "art massacre" in Moscow. Plans were already afoot among the unconventional artists to mark the anniversary of the regime's use of bulldozers and water cannon to disrupt an open air art show. The artists' determination to act regardless of the consequences may have convinced the authorities that a compromise this year was the best way to minimize publicity.

The artists say they are very satisfied with the current arrangements, which provide for showing some 1,000 paintings by almost 200 exhibitors in a large, two-story hall. No prior censorship of the works has been imposed, save for a ban on "anti-Soviet" and "pornographic" art.

The regime, however, scored points in scheduling the exhibit after the September 15th anniversary, and in limiting exhibitors to those legally resident in Moscow. Similarly, the Leningrad show is limited to artists resident in that city. There are press reports that a splinter group of artists in Moscow is unhappy with these stipulations and

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that some of them are planning an unauthorized "gesture" in Moscow either on September 15 or during the later exhibit.

By limiting the Moscow and Leningrad shows to local artists, the regime avoids Ministry of Culture involvement. Local cultural affairs come under the competence of municipal authorities. Culture minister and candidate Politburo member Petr Demichev can thus disclaim responsibility for the shows' success or failure.

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Romania: First Portugal, and Now Angola

The Romanians, who are attempting to stake out a role in Portuguese affairs, are injecting themselves into the Angolan crisis as well.

Stefan Andrei, Romanian party secretary for foreign relations and a close adviser to President Ceausescu, arrived in Luanda on Sunday. He immediately met with Angolan Popular Liberation Movement (MPLA) leader Agostinho Neto.

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Last week Andrei paid a sudden, unannounced visit to Lisbon where he may have sought Lisbon's consent to the extension of Bucharest's good offices in mediating the Angolan crisis. His presence in Angola suggests he may have been given the green light.

Andrei's mission to Luanda reflects the Romanian penchant for exploiting every opportunity to increase Bucharest's international prestige. The Romanians earlier attempted to play the mediator in the Middle East and in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

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Soviets Sign Third Natural
Gas Contract with Austria

Soviet and Austrian officials signed a third natural gas agreement on August 22 whereby Austria will receive annually an additional 17.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas--equivalent to 8,300 barrels per day of oil--from 1978 to 2000. Moscow also agreed to try to supply Austria with additional gas during 1976-77. Contracts were signed for Austrian delivery of \$154 million worth of large diameter pipe under long-term, low-interest credits.

The original natural gas agreement, signed in 1968, called for Soviet delivery of 53 billion cubic feet of natural gas annually. During 1971 to 1974, Austrian officials tried unsuccessfully to negotiate a doubling of the volume of natural gas deliveries. The USSR agreed last November to a one-third increase in deliveries beginning in 1978, but was able at the same time to renegotiate prices--from the equivalent of \$2.35 per barrel of oil to a sliding formula reflecting a 20 percent discount from the prevailing prices of alternative fuels. The 1968 and 1974 agreements were also accompanied by contracts for Austrian delivery of large-diameter pipe.

Austria's willingness to renegotiate prices and provide subsidized credits in return for additional Soviet natural gas deliveries probably results from Vienna's concern about declining domestic production of natural gas. The Soviet willingness to increase deliveries after two years of refusal can be traced in part to Moscow's critical need for large-diameter pipe to expand its oil and gas pipeline network. Moreover, Moscow realizes that exportable surpluses of oil will diminish in the 1980s and that it will have to sell more natural gas to

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generate needed revenues. Annual Soviet earnings from natural gas sold to Austria, for example, will rise from \$38 million last year to an estimated \$150 million by 1978.

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Soviet Visitor Highlights During August

Commercial visits by Soviet computer experts, automotive engineers, and chemical industry administrators highlighted an otherwise slow month for bilateral business contacts. Seventy Soviet commercial visa applications were approved for August arrival, approximately the same number as for July. None of August's visits could be described as "high level."

--the Control Data Corporation and other US computer companies entertained a contingent from Elektornorgtehnika, the foreign trade association that imports computers.

--administrators and specialists of the Soviet chloric industry arrived at facilities of Standard Oil of Ohio, which is providing the Soviet organization Tekhmashimport with technology for an acrylonitrile plant.

In exchange activity, the Soviet-US working group on gas met in Washington and visited various gas production facilities in the midwest. The noted transport engineer, Konstantin Silin, who helped the Chinese bridge the Yangtse River in the 1950's, accompanied a Soviet exchange delegation that studied US bridge and tunnel construction.

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